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FROM A DESIGN BY HOLBEIN.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

THE ARTISTIC YEAR.

VICTOR CHAMPIER. *L'Année Artistique. L'Administration — Les Musées — Les Écoles — Le Salon Annuel — L'Exposition Universelle — Les Ventes de l'Hôtel Drouot — L'Art en Province — L'Art à l'Étranger — Bibliographie et Nécrologie — Documents Officiels.* Année 1878. Paris: A. Quantin. 1879. 8vo. iv + 696 pp.

IT does not need long phrases," says M. Champier in the Preface of his work, "to explain the purpose of this book. Accustomed by inclination, as well as by my duties as a journalist, to gather all the contemporary documents relating to the fine arts, it has seemed to me that I might be doing something useful by arranging my notes in the form of a repertory, to be brought out every year. Art holds so high a place in modern estimation, it plays such an important part in the economic and moral life of nations, its influence is so potent and so varied, that the neglect to publish an 'Artistic Year-Book,' alongside of the many literary, musical, scientific, historic, geographical, theatrical, and other year-books which have appeared successively, is really quite surprising." This want M. Champier has set himself to supply, and, with the aid of a number of foreign contributors, he has succeeded in producing a book which will be welcomed by every one who takes a lively interest in art, as it contains in a compact form a vast amount of information of the most valuable kind, which it would be almost impossible to bring together by private effort.

Of the countries of which M. Champier treats, — necessarily all of them European countries, if we except the short mention made of art in the United States in the report on the Exposition, — France, very naturally, is accorded the lion's share of space. And it is this part of the book, also, which is of especial interest to Americans, as France is the most direct contrary of the United States in its manner of dealing with the arts. Although there is no longer a "state religion" in France, there is still, according to M. Champier, a "state art" there. "Among all civilized countries," says our author, "France is without doubt the one in which the fine arts are most vigorously directed and assisted." Fortunately, we are also unencumbered by a state religion; whether it is to be deplored or not that we have no state art may be a question still open to discussion, — in view of some of the government buildings which adorn our cities.

The "General Direction of the Fine Arts" in France forms the second section of the "Ministry of Public Instruction and the Fine Arts." It is composed of six bureaux: — 1. Instruction; 2. The Encouragement of the arts; 3. Historical Monuments; 4. Theatres; 5. National Manufactories (Gobelins, Beauvais, Sèvres); 6. Employés and Accounts. The sum placed at the disposal of the Direction, according to the budget of 1878, amounted to about 7,500,000 francs (\$1,500,000),¹ the various objects for which this sum is to be expended being fixed by law. This is not the place to discuss the criticisms passed upon the budget by those who were dissatisfied with the comparatively insignificant sums appropriated for certain objects, as for example the amount of 150,000 francs (\$30,000) set aside for purchases for the Louvre collections. It will be of greater interest to American readers to know how the Direction sought, with the means at its command, to realize the purpose for which it was created, i. e. the encouragement of French art. This may best be done by giving the substance of some passages from the report of the Marquis de Chennevières, the late Director of Fine Arts, which conveys a very clear idea of the plan adopted. It has been remarked of late years, says M. de Chennevières, that the aim of French art is deteriorating, and that the grand historical works of former days are giving way to works of *genre*. To counteract this decline it will be necessary to provide the artists of France with opportunities for doing more important things. The French school shows every year, in the public expositions, to what extent the solidity of its studies and the skill in managing great compositions enable it to produce an *ensemble* of monumental decorations which might be the pride of the whole country. But if these studies find no reward, and consequently remain useless, it is only too certain that before long they will be neglected, and French art will inevitably go to decay. It is not sufficient, therefore, to maintain schools, and to distribute the *grand prix de Rome* and the *prix du Salon*, but it will be absolutely necessary to employ the artists in the decoration of the public buildings, — city halls, court-houses, universities, libraries, museums, exchanges, etc., — not only of Paris, but of the provinces as well. The list of works ordered, as given in the report

¹ In the same year, England expended £307,414 (about \$1,500,000) upon its Science and Art Department, while Germany set aside only 2,438,230 marks (\$609,557.50) for artistic purposes. This sum, however, evidently does not comprise the expenditures of the individual German states.

(p. 587 seq.), shows that the care of the state is not confined with partiality to any one branch of art. The reproductive as well as the creative arts equally enjoy the protection of the nation. It is interesting in this connection to read what M. de Chennevières (p. 590) says in respect to lithography. This art, after having been during a period of forty years an admirable instrument in the hands of great masters, such as Géricault, the Vernets, Charlet, Bonington, Delacroix, De Lemud, Raffet, Gavarni, Daumier, etc., and in those of reproductive artists like Cél. Nanteuil, Français, Mouilleron, Eug. Leroux, Soulanges-Tessier, Sudre, Aubry-Lecomte, etc., has suddenly lost the support of public favor, and is threatened with absolute annihilation, unless it receives the aid which it merits. M. de Chennevières, therefore, ordered a number of lithographs to be made from celebrated paintings, and requested that authority be given for further orders of a like kind.

Assuming that the aid of the state can exercise a beneficial influence over art, the superiority of French art is not to be wondered at, especially when we consider that the state is vigorously seconded in its efforts by the city of Paris, which yearly expends something like \$60,000 for paintings, sculptures, painted windows, engravings, medals, etc. This sum, moreover, includes only movable works of art, and does not comprise the public buildings, with their painted and sculptured decorations.

It must be admitted, however, that even in France the wisdom of such an artificial fostering of art is by no means universally approved. Among the opponents of the whole system, the late Viollet-le-Duc was one of the staunchest, and when, in January, 1878, there was some talk of making him Director of the Fine Arts, he took occasion to say, in a letter to the *Bien Public*, that, if the position were offered to him, he might perhaps accept it for about twenty-four hours, in the sole hope of demonstrating that the wisest thing to do would be to suppress it altogether.

The most significant event of the year 1878, for France, was the introduction of the compulsory study of drawing into the primary and higher schools (*lycées*). In view of the importance of the subject, and of the marked attention it has of late received in the United States, it may not be amiss to set down here what M. Champier has to say upon it (p. 12): — "This reform had long been prepared by the efforts of the Director, and it had long been asked for by men of clear vision, who were distressed by the flagrant insufficiency of our artistic education, and dreaded the danger which, as its result, might befall our national industries. By an inexplicable and lasting misunderstanding, which prevails even to this day, art, and in consequence drawing, which is its first instrument, was looked upon as a superfluity of education; it was thrown together with the small baggage of agreeable accomplishments. Instead of assigning to it the noble and beautiful part which belongs to it in the development of the judgment, the elevation of ideas, the perfecting of the power of exact observation by the direct examination of forms, its services were disdained, or rather the grandeur of its mission was not understood. It is necessary, therefore, to uproot the false idea, that drawing is only a more or less brilliant accessory of education; it is necessary to introduce it into the gymnastic training of the mind, with the same rights as grammar, history, or the dead languages." M. Champier then proceeds to discuss the economical and industrial ad-

vantages of drawing. But for his arguments the reader must be referred to the book itself.

It is to be hoped that M. Champier will find encouragement sufficient to enable him to issue many future volumes of *L'Année Artistique*.

S. R. KOEHLER.

BOOKS IN PREPARATION.

AMERICAN.



MR. GEO. C. MASON'S *Biography of Gilbert Stuart*, to be published by Messrs. Chas. Scribner's Sons, will probably be out before Christmas. The list of Stuart's pictures brought together by Mr. Mason, and given in the book, contains above 600 entries, including the Washington portraits, to which the author devotes a special chapter. There has always been much confusion in regard to these portraits, and it has been Mr. Mason's endeavor to throw as much light upon the subject as possible. The notes which accompany the list embrace, besides the history of the pictures to which they apply, reminiscences gathered in families and from old letters and other documents not previously published. The book will be illustrated by a head of Washington, engraved by Burt, and never before reproduced, a photogravure of the same head, and ten photogravures from other works by Stuart. On the title-page there will be an engraved portrait of the artist, from the miniature by Miss Goodridge (usually written Goodrich), and there will also be an etched head of Stuart from his own pen-and-ink drawing, the only drawing by him which is at present known.

MR. W. J. LINTON'S *Practical Hints on Wood-Engraving, for the Instruction of Reviewers and the Public*, illustrated by several cuts, is about to be issued by Messrs. Lee & Shepard of Boston.

MR. ROBERT HOE, JR., of New York, has prepared a new and enlarged edition of Maberly's *Print Collector*, which will be published by Messrs. Dodd, Mead, & Co.

MR. W. S. BAKER, author of a catalogue of the works of William Sharp and of a book on American engravers, has just finished a new work, entitled *The Engraved-Portraits of Washington, with Notices of the Originals and Brief Biographical Sketches of the Painters*, which will be published by Messrs. Lindsay & Baker, of Philadelphia.

MR. S. G. W. BENJAMIN'S *Our American Artists*, illustrated by portraits and other engravings, is announced by Messrs. D. Lothrop & Co., of Boston.

FOREIGN.

M. PAUL LACROIX has completed *Le XVII^e Siècle, Institutions, Usages et Costumes, France 1590-1700*. The volume, illustrated by 16 colored illustrations and 250 wood-cuts, is to be published before the end of the year. Another volume, *Lettres, Sciences et Arts au XVII^e Siècle*, is to follow next year.

DR. HEINRICH KÄBDEBO has published the first part of his *Hand-Lexikon österreichischer Künstler, etc.*, which is to contain condensed notices of about ten or twelve thousand of the more important Austrian artists, skilled artisans, writers on art, and amateurs, from the fifteenth century to the present time.